accent on
avila
COLLEGE

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COMMENCEMENT HIGHLIGHTED BY TALK

The evening was perfect, from processional to recessional. The grounds in front of Avila were thronged with people, sitting in patient rows under blue skies to observe a loved one receive academic hood and diploma at the 59th Commencement of Avila College on May 22.

335 graduates (up from 211 last year) listened to rules for living suggested by the Commencement speaker, Paul DeBacco, Corporate Vice President of Personnel for Hallmark Cards, member of Avila's Board of Counselors, and part-time instructor in the Business Department.

DeBacco told the class of 1976 (in part) ". . . I feel very secure about the future of this institution and certain that the progressive trends noted in recent years will continue . . .

"I have chosen to visit with you . . . about the responsibilities you have to yourselves . . . What I refer to as *self-management.*

". . . It is never easy for any of us to look at ourselves. Most of us do so only when forced to do so by a crisis, anxiety, or by blunt confrontation with reality.

"So, as you prepare to enter into the frenetic and all-consuming world of making a living and building a professional career, I thought it might be good for us to talk about these responsibilities to self.

1. *Guard your personal integrity* . . . Each of you is uniquely individual unto yourself. Place a very high value on your integrity. Guard it and look after it.

". . . By being ourselves, we will find our proper niche. Your personal integrity may not be valued highly in the first work environment you encounter. Don't sacrifice it. It is too precious to surrender, just to get along. That will only delay a deeper unhappiness. There is a place for *you* . . . The right place where you will be happy with your personal integrity intact. To give service, you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity . . .

"A deep belief in yourself, quietly extolled, is the best approach.

2. *Trust others*

". . . You and I have neither the time nor the energies to be distrustful, constantly watching out, checking up, or doing it ourselves to protect our interest. Ralph Waldo Emerson, said, 'Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.'

". . . I urge you to trust others — until they prove themselves untrustworthy. You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you do not trust enough.

3. *Be willing to change* . . .

"External factors will frequently affect your comfortable world. A calm evaluation, with an open mind, will make change reasonable to you.

". . . The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.

". . . Change is usually only a temporary nuisance. Most often it leads to the excitement of a challenger and a new enthusiasm. Change is not always growth, but when judged objectively, it frequently leads to growth.

"Cardinal Newman said, 'To live is to change and to be perfect is to have changed often.'

4. *Never undersell yourself.*

". . . Confidence is based on knowledge. The unknown scares us and defeats us — before we try. But you can dispel many gloomy and negative thoughts if you will simply divide your new situation into two lists: what I know about this new situation, *and* what I don't know about this new situation.

". . . You will learn that, 'Wise people do not move in giant jumps outside the areas of successful past experience, but only through the self-confidence of small advances in knowledge.'

". . . A full degree of self-confidence will enable you to occupy an important place; the place to which your talents entitle you.

5. *Give early consideration to what goals and values you will aspire.*

"What are your goals in life? . . . Take the time to think, to evaluate.

". . . Avoid an aimless existence that leads to very little for you personally and nothing for society.

"Effective 'Self-Management' is not merely a tool to insure your success in the world . . . there can be no success — without personal happiness and personal fulfillment.

"Good luck to each of you and, again, congratulations."

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Sr. Olive Louise, president of Avila, and chairman of the Missouri Colleges Fund, receives a contribution from F. X. Scott, Industrial Relations Manager, Ford Motor Company, Claycomo, Missouri. Sister will be chairman of the Fund for another two-year stint, 1976-78.

THREE WIN AVILA MEDAL

At the Honors Convocation on May 22, three women who have given outstanding service to Avila were awarded the Medal of Honor: Sr. Rita Flaherty, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Mrs. Catherine Dougherty, Secretary to the Dean of Students, and Mrs. Marian Geising, Secretary to the Chairman of the Nursing Department. (Sr. Rita will be featured in this issue, and Katie and Marian next time.)

For Sr. Rita Flaherty, CSJ, an alumna of St. Teresa's Academy and College, returning to teach at Avila in 1968 was in the nature of a homecoming celebration.

With degrees in mathematics from Fontbonne and St. Louis University, and many years of classroom experience, "Sr. Rita enjoys teaching mathematics; she delights in challenging her students with its theory, precision, and beauty. At the same time she takes great pleasure in knowing her students individually, in passing on an honorable tradition that she herself received when she was a college student." (to quote Sr. Mary Fitzpatrick, CSJ who read the Honors citation.)

Aside from her busy career of all math classes, Sister enjoys the creative arts of gardening, sewing and reading.

P.S.C. Drive Makes Progress

After seven weeks of sustained effort, sixteen workers have added 45 new members to the President's Scholarship Club, raising the roster number to 395. This is not a final count. Due to demand for more time to bring in prospects, the drive date has been extended from May 31 to June 30. Dues, $50 annually, are used entirely for tuition grants.

Shown at the April 19 President's Scholarship Club Membership Drive Kickoff luncheon at the Kansas City Club are Avila's academic dean Dick Scott, and members of the P.S.C. executive committee; Bob Reintjes, secretary-treasurer, Ron Bennett, vice-chairman, Helm Lillis, chairman, and Ed Thornhill, chairman of Avila's Board of Counselors.